

THOMAS, Robert T., one of the original Utah pioneers of 1847, was born Jan. 8, 1822, in Richmond, North Carolina, the son of Henry and Esther Thomas. He was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Feb. 12, 1844, by Benjamin L. Clapp. The same year he moved with his father's family to



Nauvoo, Illinois. In April, 1844, he was ordained a Seventy and filled a mission to the States of Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi and Alabama, returning to Nauvoo the following year. He was a participant in many of the persecutions endured by the saints during their sojourn in Illinois. He moved with the saints to Council Bluffs, and in the spring of 1847 started with the first company of pioneers from the Missouri river westward toward the Rocky Mountains, helping to make the roads and bridges, and opening up the way for the gathering of Israel. When Pres. Brigham

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Young and others were taken sick at the head of Echo canyon, Bro. Thomas was one of those who were told to go ahead in Orson Pratt's advance company, and consequently he arrived in the Valley ahead of Pres. Young. The same fall he went as far as the South Pass and then returned to the Valley. He passed through the cricket experiences of 1848 and in 1849 he was sent to Provo, Utah co., Utah, where he took an active part in quelling the Indian troubles during the winter of 1849-50. In April, 1850, he married Mary Ann Turner. In 1853 he was called to go to Iron county, but returned to the north again in 1855. In 1857 (May 10th) he was set apart as senior president of the 45th quorum of Seventy, which position he occupied the remainder of his life. Later, the same year, when the people of Utah were threatened with an invading army, he went to Echo canyon in charge of the company known as the "Lost Camp." He served as justice of the peace for Provo City for eleven years, was appointed by Gov. Chas. Durkee major in the Nauvoo Legion in 1866 and called on a mission to Nebraska and Iowa in 1870. Bro. Thomas died Feb. 28, 1892, at Provo. One of the resolutions passed by the members of his quorum says: "Pres. Robt. T. Thomas was a man of honesty, benevolence, sympathy and integrity, his ear being open to the plaint of the distressed, and his hand open to their relief; he listened to the words of anxiety and care and was ever willing to impart words of comfort to the weak and erring, extending a strong hand to help them along; and to the Church he was a pillar of strength." —